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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/714,512	11/14/2003	Jean Ellen Johnson	STEA-1-1001	9836
25315	7590	09/06/2005	EXAMINER	
BLACK LOWE & GRAHAM, PLLC 701 FIFTH AVENUE SUITE 4800 SEATTLE, WA 98104			AVILA, STEPHEN P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3617	

DATE MAILED: 09/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/714,512

Applicant(s)

JOHNSON, JEAN ELLEN

Examiner

Stephen Avila

Art Unit

3617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 and 10-50 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 29-43 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 10-28 and 44-50 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 4-8, 10-15, 18-25, 44 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown in view of Jones (newly cited). Brown discloses a method and apparatus for a person floatation device with a covered belt 34, a buoyant material 31, and a cover 33. Note that the device of Brown also discloses stitching 36. Not disclosed by Brown is a nylon belt with stitching of the belt by bar tacks adjacent the openings for the belt. Jones teaches a nylon belt 8 (note column 3, line 1) with stitching by bar tacks 41 a belt near the openings for the belt (note Figure 3). It would have been obvious to a person for ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the belt of Brown of nylon as taught by Jones for light weight and durability and to stitch the belt with bar tacks near the openings for the belt for high strength.

3. Claims 2, 3, 16, 17, 26-28, 45 and 47-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown in view of Jones as applied to claims 1, 15 and 44 above, and further in view of Khanamirian. Brown does not disclose a stretchable neoprene cover. Khanamirian teaches a stretchable neoprene cover (column 3, lines 18-36). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the cover of Brown to be stretchable neoprene as taught by Khanamirian for superior fit, form, function, protection and to be aesthetically pleasing.

4. Claims 29-43 are allowed.

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. DiForte shows a belt with stitching. Baker shows a belt with stitching.

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-8, 9-28, and 44-50 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen Avila whose telephone number is 571-272-6678. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 7 AM to 3 PM (EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samuel J. Morano can be reached on 571-272-6684. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Stephen Avila
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3617

Avila
8/31/05